



university of
 groningen

Memorandum on UG Tenure Track Policy

Approved by the Board of the
University on 15 May 2017,
effective from 1 July 2017

Contents

Until 2016 the UG's Tenure Track policy consisted of the specific memoranda per faculty combined with the UG Tenure Track Professor (adjunct hoogleraar) regulations. An evaluation conducted in 2015 revealed a need for making the shared elements of the institution's Tenure Track policy explicit and for pointing out the differences among faculties.

The policy formulated in this memorandum supersedes all differing policy at faculty level. The Faculty Boards shall adapt their respective faculty policies to the institutional memorandum as far as necessary during and after the approval of this memorandum by the Board of the University.

1	General	3
2	The UG Tenure Track	4
3	Up or out	5
4	Tailored Track	6
5	Criteria	7
6	Open recruitment	8
7	Roles and authority	9
8	Training and support	11
9	Continuous improvement	13

General

1

The goal of the UG's Tenure Track policy is to offer young academics a career path. Meeting the objectives and criteria of the track will result in an appointment as Associate Professor. Completing certain specific tracks will result in an appointment as Full Professor at the UG¹. In this way the UG aims to attract young academic talent and to foster a long-lasting commitment. The regular Tenure Track policy is supplemented by a specific Tenure Track policy to make the University extra appealing to women: the Rosalind Franklin Fellowship programme. Staff members can make the most of their talents and deliver good performances in teaching and research. In addition, this academic career path allows the University to train its own staff and she will help to meet the demand for Associate and Full Professors.

The University of Groningen is committed to the principles of the European Commission's Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. Link: <http://www.rug.nl/about-us/where-do-we-stand/quality-works/room-for-talent/>

Our institution is working on the realization of the HR excellence in research action plan through continuous evaluation and improvement of its HR policy for academics, in consultation with the faculty boards, professors and other academics.



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

This UG Tenure Track memorandum identifies the shared framework of the UG's institutional policy regarding tenure tracks. This does not mean, however, that tenure track policy is identical throughout the University of Groningen. Its implementation also differs per faculty.

The general principles of the track, however, are identical everywhere in terms of appointments, composition of the Appointment and Assessment Committees, responsibilities of the Board of the University, the Faculty Boards and managers. The practical implementation of the career path may vary across faculties. This can be observed most clearly in the performance criteria applied and, for example, in the proportion of time to be spent on teaching versus research.

Moreover, the extent to which faculties use the Tenure Track differs according to the academic staffing policy they adhere to. While some faculties, such as Science and Engineering, Economics and Business, and Behavioural and Social Sciences, treat all their vacancies as Tenure Track positions, others, including Spatial Sciences and the UMCG, treat only some as Tenure Track positions. Still others, including Theology and Religious Studies, Arts, Law and Philosophy, only occasionally create Tenure Track positions. The University of Groningen supports this policy diversity, so that faculties may optimally align their staffing needs with the characteristics of the labour markets in which they operate.

¹ This memorandum refers to the career path leading to an appointment as Full Professor 2 as a 'Tenure Track', even though its participants already have a permanent position for part of the track.

2

The UG Tenure Track

The section below describes the shared Tenure Track. The implementation at faculty level is much more detailed and involves many more steps. Since these details differ across faculties, they are not presented here. The framework of this track is Article 6.6 of the Collective Labour Agreement for Dutch Universities.

Phase 1

Temporary appointment as Assistant Professor² for a maximum of 6/7 years³.

After 5 years the Faculty Tenure Track Committee performs an assessment for promotion to phase two and a permanent position.

Phase 2

Permanent appointment as Associate Professor (with ius promovendi)*

The Board of the University appoints the staff member as Associate Professor with ius promovendi for part of or the entire phase 2. After 4 to 7 years, staff members can have themselves assessed by the Faculty Tenure Track Committee for the final step of the track: appointment as Full professor (HGL) 2 by the Board of the University.

Final result of the track

The staff member is appointed Full Professor (HGL) 2 according to the usual procedure.

²The UMCG starts its tenure track with a post-doc phase in a position as researcher.

³The temporary appointment at the UG is for 7 years, at the UMCG for 5,5 years on inception. The additional year at the UG is agreed upon at the start and used as a buffer for any life events that might occur, such as illness and parental or care leave.

	Phase 1	Phase 2	End
Duration	Assessment after 5 years, maximum total duration of the appointment 6/7 years	Approximately 7 years	Indefinite
Type of appointment	Temporary	Permanent	Permanent
Position	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor (UHD), Associate Professor with ius promovendi (adjunct hoogleraar)	Full Professor (HGL) 2
Scale	11,12	13,14	H2

* For the shortened tracks, the end result is an appointment as Associate Professor.

Up or out

3

The career path as described assumes successful completion of the different steps. The Tenure Tracker meets the norms of the performance criteria and is promoted to the next phase: *up*. What happens if the assessments are negative, the career path stagnates or is disrupted prematurely? This might be the case in both the first and the second phase.

The track ends for Tenure Trackers who, in the judgement of the Committee, fail to meet the criteria after 5 years, at the end of phase 1: *out*. In the event that the career track is discontinued, employer and employee will have a conversation in which they come to an agreement concerning the early termination of the employment. The starting point in this discussion is to set a generous term that allows for approximately one year's time to find other employment, either inside or outside the UG. The institution will provide support for this.

The track ends for candidates who fail to meet the criteria at the end of phase 2 within the stipulated timeframe. Their appointment as Associate Professor ends after a maximum of 7 years. Such candidates will retain the *ius promovendi* for 5 more years and will return to their original job title of Associate Professor. In specific situations, the Board of the University can decide otherwise on the basis of the hardship clause.



Tailored Track

4

The Tenure Track is an intensive track that is usually offered as a full-time position and requires staff members' full-time devotion. But one can imagine situations in which staff members prefer a 4-day work week at the University of Groningen. This does imply, however, that these Tenure Trackers need more time to achieve their performance objectives. Illness may also delay progress in the tenure track. The current Collective Labour Agreement only allows for a 3-month extension of this specific temporary appointment. As a result, less time may in fact be available to achieve the criteria imposed, due to part-time work and disruptions such as pregnancy or illness. The general agreement within the University of Groningen is that the criteria for promotion remain in place in such cases. Rather than adapting the criteria, the assessment by the Tenure Track Committee is postponed. In such cases, termination of the temporary appointment may already be imminent by operation of law, and agreements are made that do justice to the situation while weighing the importance of being a consistent employer.

Previous employment at the University of Groningen may also necessitate earlier permanent appointment, i.e. prior to the promotion to Associate Professor. Such situations require tailored solutions and cannot be fully described here. Customization must, however, be properly justifiable towards fellow Tenure Trackers.

Below is a description of the duration of the temporary appointment at different numbers of FTE.

	Time until assessment	Buffer for life events	Total duration
Number of FTE 100%	5 years	2 years	7 years (max. 6 years without any life events)
Number of FTE 90%	5 years, 7 months	2 years, 3 months	7 years and 10 months (max. 6 years and 10 months without any life events)
Number of FTE 80%	6 years, 2 months	2 years, 6 months	8 years and 8 months (max. 7 years and 4 months without any life events)

Criteria

The entry requirements and the requirements for admission to the next phase are determined at the faculty level and laid down in a faculty tenure track memorandum. The activities to which the requirements pertain are common for all faculties: teaching, research, valorization and organization/administration. The focus will not be on all four activities simultaneously all the time, but a mix of responsibilities will be imposed.

Behavioural competences that are essential to the successful functioning as a professor will be a part of the performance requirements. This includes competences such as active professionalization, guiding leadership, reflective skills and strategic action, collegiality, creating a good atmosphere and team spirit, giving and receiving feedback, integrity, planning and organizing, insight in and commitment to the organization of the faculty and the University of Groningen as a whole. Obviously, performance measures will vary across faculties, depending on the publication conventions and, for example, opportunities for obtaining external funding in the academic field concerned. The extent to which deficiencies can be compensated depends on the individual faculty, the criterion concerned, and the compensation available in another criterion. The faculty Tenure Track memorandum stipulates the conditions under which compensation is possible.

Institution-wide requirements for appointment to the Tenure Track:

- PhD degree; gained;
- Publications in peer-reviewed journals;
- International network/experience;
- Innovative research proposal which could potentially attract external funding;
- Teaching experience;
- UTQ certificate or the obligation to obtain one as soon as possible;
- Good command of English (and Dutch eventually), both oral and written;
- Demonstrable organizational qualities and excellent communication skills.

These requirements have been elaborated and supplemented with faculty-specific appointment requirements by each faculty.

6

Recruitment: open recruitment in the international labour market⁴

As a rule, vacancies for Tenure Track Assistant Professors are announced to the international labour market in English via national media, job sites (Academic Transfer, ResearchGate, Euraxess Jobs), international networks and job markets. Tenure Track positions are considered the instrument par excellence to attract more women to higher academic positions. Each faculty has its own target figures to ensure a sufficient intake of female talent in phase 1 of the Tenure Track. Members of Appointment Advisory Committees are professionalized through workshops.



⁴ In conformity with the European Commission's Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R). Link: <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/rights/singleNews/1851>

Roles and authority

7

Several people/positions and committees each have their own role during the tenure track. These roles are described below.

Appointment Advisory Committee (BAC)

This committee is appointed by the Faculty Board and gives recommendations on the content of the vacant Tenure Track position, the structural report and the selection criteria to be imposed as part of the faculty Tenure Track policy.

The composition of the BAC generally has to meet in principle the same requirements as that of the BAC for full professors.

- a. At least two female members, including one full professor;
- b. At least one external expert (full professor);
- c. The Programme Director and Academic Director of the relevant school of research;
- d. One representative of the academic staff with knowledge of the field.
- e. One student member;
- f. The HR advisor is an advisory member.

In addition, it is important to involve international staff members in the selection process.

Faculty Tenure Track Committee

This committee, appointed by the Faculty Board, advises the Faculty Board during the phase transitions on the extent to which candidates meet the performance criteria. Its members conduct a thorough review of the documentation concerning the appointment and the phase transitions. They are allowed to speak to informants as well as the candidates in person.

The Committee does not have hiring authority but offers advice to the Faculty Board. It is advisable for its consistent functioning that (a part of) the Tenure Track Committee be appointed for a longer period of time.

The composition of the Tenure Track Committee is different from that of the Appointment Advisory Committee in some faculties.

- a. At least two female members, including one full professor;
- b. At least one external expert (full professor);
- c. One representative of the academic staff with knowledge of the field.
- d. Not at all faculties: the Programme Director and Academic Director of the relevant school of research;
- e. One student member;
- f. The HR advisor is an advisory member.

Faculty Board

The Faculty Board decides on the appointment of a candidate, or to advise and nominate a candidate to the Board of the University in case of a Rosalind Franklin Fellowship, on the advice of the BAC or the faculty Tenure Track Committee.

Board of the University

The Board of the University agrees to a nomination as Rosalind Franklin Fellow or a nomination as Associate Professor and appoints candidates as Associate Professor or Full Professor (HGL) 2, i.e. at the end of the appointment track. The Board of the University also decides on any rejections. All letters of appointment or rejection as Associate or Full Professor are sent on behalf of the Board of the University.

Supervising Full Professor

All Tenure Trackers will have a supervising Full Professor as their manager. These Full Professors conduct the annual Results and Development (R&O) interviews, encourage candidates and ensure that they become well anchored within the faculty and are introduced in the academic networks. Since the Tenure Trackers will be forming their own groups and setting their own course, a development-oriented attitude is required from the supervisors. The supervisors advise the Tenure Track Committee or are a part of it in certain faculties.



Training and Support

8

It is important for their career development that Tenure Trackers feel at home at the University of Groningen and that their teaching and research are anchored within the organization. Customized and generic training and support are available to the Tenure Trackers and their managers to achieve this.

Support for Tenure Trackers

The University of Groningen has developed a support programme, tailored to the situation of Tenure Trackers. It includes both general activities and individual support.

A good initial phase of the Tenure Track enhances the likelihood of its successful completion. For this reason, Tenure Trackers are assigned a mentor after arriving in Groningen. Mentors are available for support and for introducing the Tenure Trackers to the University of Groningen. In addition, a training plan is drawn up in the first months of the appointment, and the requirements of the Tenure Track programme are explained and translated in terms of the individual situation of the Tenure Tracker.

What is the added value of a mentor over a manager?

A mentor is an experienced Full Professor who knows the ins and outs of the University and knows how to handle things. Mentors are not necessarily from the same faculty as the Tenure Trackers/mentees. Mentors are independent, are not accountable for the functioning of their mentee(s) and are sparring partners. Mentorship is career guidance by an experienced colleague who is at a distance, and not an immediate party in daily affairs, who is able to reflect on and assist in the development of the mentee.

Various activities are available in addition to this individual support:

1 Tenure Track Network

The Tenure Trackers are introduced into the University's existing Tenure Track network. The network meetings address various subjects that are helpful to the introduction of the mostly international Tenure Trackers to Groningen.

Examples of subjects are:

- Introduction to the University, the city of Groningen and the Netherlands
- Introduction of support staff and support departments, such as Dean Talent Development, Research & Valorisation, Faculty Funding Officers, Human Resources etc.

- Learning from the experiences of previous Tenure Trackers.
- Themes such as diversity, management, PhD supervision, etc.

2 Personal marketing

It is important for academics to be internationally visible. Several activities are being offered to help Tenure Trackers achieve this aim. Examples include:

- Designing your own staff page (MEPA)
- Introduction to the Research Information System (CRIS)
- Media training
- Increasing societal impact

3 Masterclass on funding

Attracting external funding is an important part of the Tenure Track. Several support activities are available for Tenure Trackers:

- Knowledge of Dutch and European grant-awarding bodies
- Routing of grant applications within the University of Groningen
- Support departments and external support for grant applications.
- Dutch Language Masterclasses

4 Academic Leadership

Besides familiarizing participants with the backgrounds of various leadership styles, the programme is primarily designed for practice, using examples from daily operations, largely provided by the participants themselves. As such, the collegial contact and exchange of experiences form

an important subsidiary objective. The following subjects are covered in the curriculum:

- situational leadership
- styles of influencing
- managing changes
- personal effectiveness

5 Acquiring the Dutch language

The acquisition of the Dutch language is encouraged in order to integrate into (Dutch) academia. It is important in acquiring means from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) and membership of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences (KNAW).

Support for supervisors/managers

Supervisors of Tenure Trackers play an important role in successfully completing the track. For this reason, supervisors are invited to an information meeting to discuss their role in an early stage of the track.

Subjects include:

- Introduction of the Tenure Trackers to the University and the academic field;
- Available support for supervisors and Tenure Trackers;
- Role and responsibility of the supervisor.

Ongoing improvement

9

Careful implementation of the Tenure Track policy requires regular monitoring of the process from a distance as well as watching for any undesired developments. Tenure Trackers themselves will be asked to share their experiences at specific times. In addition, a joint meeting will be organized for the relevant administrators, supervisors and HR employees every four years to evaluate the policy. Faculty administrators will furthermore update the faculty memoranda on a regular basis, after which the memos will be approved by the Board of the University.

